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Letter dated 26 March 2002 from the Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I wish to draw your attention to the latest incidents in the ongoing campaign of Palestinian terrorism directed against the citizens of Israel.

On Sunday evening, 24 March, at approximately 11.30 p.m., Avi Sabag, aged 24, was driving his car south of Hebron when Palestinian terrorists ambushed the vehicle, spraying gunfire that struck Sabag in the upper body. Sabag, who was married just six months ago to his wife Dafna, sustained critical wounds in the attack and died soon after.

Earlier in the day, another Israeli — Esther Klieman, aged 23 — was killed in a similar incident, when Palestinian terrorists opened fire on the public bus in which she was travelling near Ateret. Klieman was en route to Ofra at the time of her death, where she worked in a kindergarten for children with Down's syndrome.

Also on Sunday, Israeli forces intercepted four terrorists who had infiltrated into Israel from Jordan. The terrorists were tracked to a spot near Kibbutz Tel Katzir and were killed by Israeli troops. Searches revealed that the terrorists were armed with Kalashnikov rifles, sniper rifles, large amounts of ammunition, and knives. Israeli forces also thwarted a number of other attacks in recent days, including the interception of a car rigged with explosives near Beka Al-Shrakia yesterday, a thwarted bombing of an Israel Defense Forces (IDF) post near Rafia on 23 March and a thwarted attack on IDF soldiers near Dugit on the same day.

This morning, Israeli security forces thwarted yet another potentially devastating terrorist attack when police officers in southern Jerusalem spotted a suspicious vehicle and ordered it to stop. Instead, the driver increased his speed and officers began to give chase, at which time the car suddenly exploded, not far from the Jerusalem Malha Mall. The Al Aksa Martyrs Brigade, the terrorist brigade affiliated with Chairman Yasser Arafat's Fatah faction, claimed responsibility.

These incidents are the latest in the ongoing campaign of Palestinian terrorism that has been detailed in my letters dated 18 March 2002 (A/56/880-S/2002/293), 14 March 2002 (A/56/876-S/2002/280), 11 March 2002 (A/56/867-S/2002/257),

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8 March 2002 (A/56/864-S/2002/252), 5 March 2002 (A/56/857-S/2002/233), 4 March 2002 (A/56/854-S/2002/222), 27 February 2002 (A/56/843-S/2002/208), 20 February 2002 (A/56/828-S/2002/185), 19 February 2002 (A/56/824-S/2002/174), 11 February 2002 (A/56/819-S/2002/164), 8 February 2002 (A/56/814-S/2002/155), 28 January 2002 (A/56/798-S/2002/126), 22 January 2002 (A/56/788-S/2002/104), 18 January 2002 (A/56/781-S/2002/86), 16 January 2002 (A/56/774-S/2002/73), 11 January 2002 (A/56/771-S/2002/47), 4 January 2002 (A/56/766-S/2002/25), 13 December 2001 (A/56/706-S/2001/1198), 4 December 2001 (A/56/678-S/2001/1150), 30 November 2001 (A/56/670-S/2001/1141), 27 November 2001 (A/56/663-S/2001/1121), 12 November 2001 (A/56/617-S/2001/1071), 5 November 2001 (A/56/604-S/2001/1048), 24 October 2001 (A/56/506-S/2001/1011), 19 October 2001 (A/56/492-S/2001/990), 17 October 2001 (A/56/483-S/2001/975), 8 October 2001 (A/56/450-S/2001/948), 5 October 2001 (A/56/444-S/2001/943), 3 October 2001 (A/56/438-S/2001/938), 24 September 2001 (A/56/406-S/2001/907), 20 September 2001 (A/56/386-S/2001/892), 17 September 2001 (A/56/367-S/2001/875), 7 September 2001 (A/56/346-S/2001/858), 4 September 2001 (A/56/331-S/2001/840), 30 August 2001 (A/56/325-S/2001/834), 27 August 2001 (A/56/324-S/2001/825), 13 August 2001 (A/56/294-S/2001/787), 9 August 2001 (A/56/286-S/2001/780), 8 August 2001 (A/56/280-S/2001/775), 6 August 2001 (A/56/272-S/2001/768), 27 July 2001 (A/56/225-S/2001/743), 26 July 2001 (A/56/223-S/2001/737), 17 July 2001 (A/56/201-S/2001/706), 13 July 2001 (A/56/184-S/2001/696), 3 July 2001 (A/56/138-S/2001/662), 2 July 2001 (A/56/131-S/2001/656), 21 June 2001 (A/56/119-S/2001/619), 19 June 2001 (A/56/98-S/2001/611), 18 June 2001 (A/56/97-S/2001/604), 13 June 2001 (A/56/92-S/2001/585), 11 June 2001 (A/56/91-S/2001/580), 4 June 2001 (A/56/85-S/2001/555), 30 May 2001 (A/56/81-S/2001/540), 25 May 2001 (A/56/80-S/2001/524), 18 May 2001 (A/56/78-S/2001/506), 11 May 2001 (A/56/72-S/2001/473), 9 May 2001 (A/56/69-S/2001/459), 1 May 2001 (A/55/924-S/2001/435), 23 April 2001 (A/55/910-S/2001/396), 16 April 2001 (A/55/901-S/2001/364), 28 March 2001 (A/55/863-S/2001/291), 27 March 2001 (A/55/860-S/2001/280), 26 March 2001 (A/55/858-S/2001/278), 19 March 2001 (A/55/842-S/2001/244), 5 March 2001 (A/55/821-S/2001/193), 2 March 2001 (A/55/819-S/2001/187), 14 February 2001 (A/55/787-S/2001/137), 13 February 2001 (A/55/781-S/2001/132), 2 February 2001 (A/55/762-S/2001/103), 25 January 2001 (A/55/748-S/2001/81), 23 January 2001 (A/55/742-S/2001/71), 28 December 2000 (A/55/719-S/2000/1252), 22 November 2000 (A/55/641-S/2000/1114), 20 November 2000 (A/55/634-S/2000/1108) and 2 November 2000 (A/55/540-S/2000/1065).

Israel holds the Palestinian Authority and its Chairman, Yasser Arafat, responsible for these incidents and for the continuing deterioration of the situation in the region. Forces under the authority of Chairman Arafat continue to perpetrate daily acts of violence against Israeli civilians, while terrorists responsible for previous attacks against Israel have been freed from Palestinian prison and are now free to plan future attacks. Expressions of hatred and intolerance are still widespread in the official Palestinian media and educational system. Despite his stated efforts to achieve a ceasefire, Chairman Arafat, in flagrant disregard for the will of the international community, has steadfastly refused to take any concrete measure that might prevent the next attack.

Israel remains committed to the achievement of a negotiated political settlement with the Palestinian leadership. But Israel will not stand idly by as an unrelenting campaign of violence, sanctioned by the Palestinian leadership, unfolds

on a daily basis, jeopardizing the safety and security of Israeli civilians. Achieving a ceasefire that will pave the way back to a process of negotiations requires more than declarations from the Palestinian side. It requires genuine action, including an end to incitement, the arrest of known terrorists and the dismantling of the vast infrastructure of terror.

The international community could contribute to this process by making clear its total rejection of acts of violence against civilians and by bringing full pressure to bear upon the Palestinian leadership in order to compel it to fulfil its obligations to fight terrorism.

I should be grateful if you would arrange to have the present letter circulated as a document of the fifty-sixth session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 166, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Yehuda **Lancry**